

# **Public Transportation in Michigan: An Economic Development Tool Whose Time Has Come**

Report from the Chair of the Public Transit Subcommittee  
A Working Document  
A Subcommittee of the House Standing Committee on Transportation

## **Subcommittee Members**

- *Chair Representative Marie Donigan (D-Royal Oak)*
- *Representative Gabe Leland (D-Detroit)*
- *Representative Coleman Young, Jr. (D-Detroit)*
- *Representative Tom Pearce (R - Rockford)*
- *Representative Marty Knollenberg, (R-Troy)*

## **Preamble**

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"A vision of Michigan's transit future is emerging. With each hearing the need for state, regional and local leaders to define and take the actions needed to move us toward that vision is becoming unequivocal."

*Kirk Steudle, Director, Michigan Department of Transportation*

*Jackie Shinn, Chief Deputy Director, Michigan Department of Transportation*

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Michigan has struggled to find a common vision for our future. Business as usual doesn't work anymore but common ground has been hard to find. One issue, however, has the potential to bring people together - the need to improve public transportation systems across the State. Many of the State's leaders from the public and private sectors believe that public transportation is an economic engine that could drive the State's economy and is an economic development tool that is underutilized in every way.

## **Subcommittee Mission Statement**

*The Public Transit Subcommittee will assess the current state of Public Transportation in Michigan and, through legislation, policy changes, and resolution, recommend changes that will improve access, efficiencies, and the effectiveness of public transportation in Michigan. Further, the Subcommittee will evaluate and examine public transportation as an economic development tool and as a catalyst for investment and job creation in our urban areas, suburban communities, and rural regions. The subcommittee recognizes that effective and efficient public transportation connects people to jobs, to health care and to each other and allows everyone to be fully involved in Michigan's economic recovery.*

## **Summary**

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"Public Transportation drives Michigan's economy and saves money. People are riding on public transportation for one of two reasons: either to get somewhere to make money or to spend money."

*Clark Harder, Executive Director, Michigan Public Transit Association*

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The Public Transit Subcommittee has held eighteen hearings with government agencies, advocates, transit operators, and private partners. Testimony was taken in generally five areas:

- MDOT and governmental responsibility, vision and purpose

- Outstate (rural and suburban) transit
- Urban transit
- Technology
- Private Partners

## **Questions Answered at Each Meeting, by Each Agency or Individual**

- *What service is your agency/activity currently providing for the public?*
- *How does it create jobs and promote the state's economic recovery?*
- *What are your goals for the future? What is your vision?*
- *What are the existing barriers?*
- *What support do you need? What can the state do to help?*

## **Testimony revealed that:**

- Efficient and modern public transportation creates jobs, spurs economic development, provides an excellent return on the dollar, is popular with the public, reduces our dependence on foreign oil, enhances access to jobs, increases productivity, saves money, limits air pollution, decreases traffic congestion and protects personal freedom, choice and mobility.
- Buses are the backbone of any transit system. Existing transit agencies have proven their viability and sustainability and have found ways to improve service, costs, and efficiencies. This success should be acknowledged, built upon and sustained.
- The State's limited but vibrant fleet of hybrid buses are developed in Michigan but not built in Michigan. Low emission buses are transforming other states. Michigan could reap the benefits of this technology in the form of good-paying jobs and a lower carbon footprint.
- Transit could be a bigger part of Michigan's economic solution if there was a long-term commitment for predictable and stable funding and a statewide policy that matched investment to demand.
- The State can help providers of public transportation statewide by taking a leadership role in the support of public transit, treating it as an economic priority for the State. The Legislature and Administration need to create forward thinking public policy about public transportation.
- Demand for better public transportation has never been greater.
- Transit is used by every sector of the population.
- Transit's time has come. Public transportation is an investment in economic development and job creation that Michigan can't afford to pass up.
- Michiganders don't know how to talk about public transportation. Myths abound. There is more support for public transportation than is commonly acknowledged.

## **Summary of Testimony**

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"Transit proposals united a broad coalition of interests in Grand Rapids because the issue is viewed as essential to the region's economic competitiveness, environmental health, and cultural well-being."

*Andy Guy, Michigan Land Use Institute*

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## **Public Transportation is Everywhere in Michigan**

- There are 79 transit agencies in 83 counties that use fixed route buses, dial-a-ride systems, water ferries and community transit.

- **Ridership and Demand in Michigan is Like Never Before**
  - Ridership increased 8.5% in 2006 over 2005.
  - There were 91,609,502 passenger trips in 2006.
  - Total vehicle miles increased 4.69% in 2006 over 2005
- **Transit - an Economic Development Tool That Could Drive Michigan's Economy**
  - Week after week the Subcommittee heard testimony about the economic development potential of modern and efficient public transportation.
  - Business recruitment and job creation has been hampered by Michigan's lack of transportation options. Michigan is competing with other states that have modern public transportation systems.
  - The Michigan Municipal League (MML) has identified transit as their number one legislative priority. Strengthening Michigan's cities is essential for Michigan's economic recovery.
  - A case was made for rebuilding metro regions around transit. Testimony revealed that a dollar invested in transit leads to \$6 in related economic activity.
  - The Rapid in Grand Rapids has received Federal approval for its plans to introduce the state's first Bus Rapid Transit system; they are also conducting a feasibility study for modern trolleys downtown, which would be similar to the successful system currently being used in Portland, Oregon. Transit proposals united a broad coalition of interests in Grand Rapids because the issue is viewed as essential to the region's economic competitiveness, environmental health, and cultural well-being.
  - Similar testimony came from SEMCOG, reminding us that southeast Michigan transit has suffered from a lack of coordinated leadership, regional consensus, and inadequate funding sources.
  - Hamtramck is the most densely populated city in the State and its proximity to Woodward Avenue, New Center, and rail-lines make them perfect participants in a regional system.
  - The experience of other cities indicates that transit is not a silver bullet but that modern transit, like good schools, universities and vibrant cities is a common denominator that defines America's most successful regions. Experience and data gathered from visits to other states and cities shows leads many people to believe that a serious investment in modern transit is not an option for Michigan - it's an urgent necessity.
  - Transit Oriented Development is high density and multi-use and is being developed in cities that have viable transit. Developers want the option in Michigan, young people use it, and it's a good land-use policy. Woodward Avenue is a prime candidate for Transit Oriented Development (TOD). Proposed transit projects in Grand Rapids have already increased property values along the proposed route.
  - Universities need modern transit – the cost to build and maintain parking lots is not cost effective and the State's lack of modern public transit limits student recruitment.
- **Transit is Becoming Environmentally Friendly and Economically Efficient**
  - Public transit is the best non-regulatory way to reduce dependence on foreign oil.
  - Flint MTA (Mass Transportation Authority) worked with Kettering University to develop the next generation of hybrid buses. These buses are on the road. Buses using advanced hybrid technology are delivering 15-20% improvement in fuel economy.
  - Transit centers in Flint, Traverse City, and Grand Rapids are LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environment Design) certified for operating "Green Buildings."
  - Flint rehabilitates buses midlife, extending bus life by 12-20 years.
  - BATA, Bay Area Transit Authority, has the first Hybrid Electric Bus, and talked about using a wind turbine to power it; half their routes have zero emissions.
  - To stretch dollars, transit agencies purchases fuel with school districts and local governments.

■ **Transit is Linked to Tourism**

- The Detroit/Southeast Michigan's tourism effort, The D, has identified transit's role in making Southeast Michigan a desirable place to live and visit, attracting young working people to the region to live, work and play. Tourism in Michigan will suffer unless vital tourism destinations, sports facilities, events, and downtowns are connected by modern and efficient transit.
- Michigan's railroads can improve efficiency, speed and on time performance, thereby making rail travel more attractive to Michigan residents and to visitors.

■ **Transit Faces Common Barriers, Issues, and Constraints**

- The Comprehensive Transportation Fund (CTF) formula impedes improvement to transit systems. More money for one system to improve means less for others. The State needs to develop a funding system that holds small agencies harmless while allowing larger agencies to invest and grow, or the State needs to develop alternative funding options for larger agencies.
- Cannibalizing the CTF to balance the State's budget is bad public policy and hurts transit.
- Interdepartmental grants (IDGs) from the MTF and CTF to other state departments hurt transit.
- The lack of a regional transit agency (i.e. DARTA) hurts efforts in Southeast Michigan to improve transit.
- The State has not been able to spend the maximum level of ten percent of the Michigan Transportation Fund for transit's operating assistance for years. Reduction in the State Operating Assistance Program has hurt transit agencies.
- The public transportation industry needs to pursue innovation in the areas of system design, advanced technologies and coordination of services. Michigan is behind in the use of modern transit technology despite the limited development and use of hybrid technology and Intelligent Transportations Systems (ITS).
- There are still gaps in service across the state. A person cannot travel the state using public transportation. Charter regulations are an issue for the development of seamless transit.
- Michigan does not have a long-term commitment for fair and predictable state support.
- Michigan does not have a statewide policy for public transportation other than MDOT's strategic plan.
- Michigan has not been able to appropriate enough money to match available federal dollars, leaving millions of federal money on the table. For each dollar in State funds the Federal Government provides a four dollar match. Michigan's tax dollars support transit in other states. The minimum twenty percent state match for all federally funded projects was reduced in 2006, opting for use of toll credits (a 'soft match') for federal funds.
- The Federal Government measures state support for transit before they approve funds for transit projects. Michigan has not shown the necessary commitment; therefore Michigan's ability to appropriate Federal funds is hindered.
- Myths and negative perceptions about transit persist and hinder progress across the state.
- Rural areas never get enough money to fully support effective transit programs.
- Michigan has a flawed state gas tax formula, heavily weighted to roads.
- Allowing communities to 'opt out' hurts transit and reinforces Michigan's perceived lack of commitment to transit.
- The lengthy process for getting federal funds hampers improvement.
- Detroit Department of Transportation's (DDOT) reliance on the Detroit General fund is a challenge. DDOT will soon be in a position where they are unable to meet service demands due to lack of funding. Ridership demands and a need for technology will surpass available funds.

- Michigan can reap the rewards of an investment in transit only if we overcome many well-known constraints, among them regional fragmentation, funding shortages, low-density land-use planning and a lack of appreciation for transit viability and potential benefits.
- Buses that have more stops, are on the roads more often, and get to their destination on time, attract more riders. Michigan needs more buses, not less, that use modern technology and are attractive to young riders.

## Recommendations suggested during testimony

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...a serious investment in modern mass transit is no longer an option for Michigan and its cities. It's an urgent necessity. Thoughtful planning for an investment in mass transit is both a path to, and a requirement for, strengthening Michigan's economic competitiveness in the 21st century.

*Andy Guy, Great Lakes Project Director, Michigan Land Use Institute*

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Transit's time has come. The Legislature and Administration need to coalesce around an effort to improve transit by creating a statewide policy that garners widespread support. Transit policy must address the needs of small operators while helping larger agencies develop regional mass transit systems. Transit is popular with the public; we must seize the moment or be left behind forever in job creation, tourism, economic development and the support of strong cities. Transit enjoys bipartisan support from both inside and outside the government, in the private and public sectors, to one degree or another. Common ground must be established so improvements can begin.

### Public Transportation as a Statewide Issue

- **Fill UPTRAN director vacancy**  
PA 484 of 1978 created a Governor appointed chief administrative officer position for the Bureau of Urban and Public Transportation (UPTRAN) within the Department of Transportation. The Director of UPTRAN is, by job description, responsible for administration of the state's public transportation programs. The position has remained vacant since 2002 when the UPTRAN director retired. If filled by a well connected and passionate advocate for transit, this position could be the ideal platform for promoting transit and coordinating statewide efforts.
- **Create a public transit commission**  
A state transit commission could develop a realistic, forward-thinking statewide policy for public transportation and oversee efforts to improve the system. The Commission could develop a single policy, strategy, and commitment to public transportation that unites the Administration, Legislature and the State's Congressional delegation, allowing us to speak in one voice and to act collectively. States and cities that have improved their transit systems have successfully completed this step.
- **Create opportunities to train transit advocates to educate the public**  
A concerted effort needs to be waged to inform and educate Michiganders including public officials, community leaders and the legislature about transit in order to dispel persistent myths and to understand the importance, benefits, and need for better public transit. In many ways elected officials are behind the public in terms of recognizing the importance of public transit. To make transit work in Michigan we need people at all levels to be on board.

### Protecting Transportation Funding

- **Protect Comprehensive Transportation Fund (CTF) funds.**  
The Comprehensive Transportation Fund (CTF) was created in Public Act 51 for public transportation purposes. Under Public Act 51, no more than ten percent of the Michigan Transportation Fund (MTF) is directed to the CTF. CTF funds are primarily used to provide capital and operating support for Michigan's 79 public transit agencies. Roughly 30 percent (an estimated \$75 million this fiscal year) of CTF revenue comes from the sales tax on motor vehicle sales. This earmark is made in the General Sales Tax Act, meaning the

funds are not constitutionally protected and can be raided to balance the budget at the expense of local transit agencies.

By introducing a constitutional amendment to earmark not less than 27.9% of 25% of the total collections on motor vehicles related items at the four percent rate to the Comprehensive Transportation Fund (CTF) this would help protect transit funding. The amendment would include certain sales tax from the lease of motor vehicles.

- **Scrutinize interdepartmental grants (IDGs) from the MTF.**

An IDG is a transfer of money from one state department to another department to cover the cost of services performed. Transportation advocates have argued that the MTF has been exploited through IDGs to balance the budget of other state departments. Preserving MTF funds and avoiding unjustified IDGs helps ensure greater funds for transit.

- **Dedicate certain portion of sales tax on leased vehicles to CTF.**

Currently the share of the use tax that comes from the leasing of automobiles, that is not constitutionally earmarked to the School Aid Fund, is dedicated to the General Fund. If we were to redirect the use tax for leased automobiles in the same fashion as sold vehicles, there would be an additional \$16 to \$20 million of revenue for the Comprehensive Transportation Fund (CTF) (based on 2004 estimates). However this new revenue to the CTF would come directly from the GF/GP revenue.

- **Support Task Force on Transportation Funding**

Fifty-two percent of the revenue for the Michigan Transportation Fund (MTF) comes from the state gas tax. However despite raises in 1984 and 1997, the revenue from the gas tax has not kept pace with the rate of inflation. With the state gas tax staying at 19-cents per gallon (15-cents for diesel), funding for state transportation projects and revenue sharing with local units of government has leveled off while the cost of operations has increased. Across the state, county road commissions are laying off employees or reducing positions through attrition due to stagnate revenue from the state. Greater strain on the MTF has a direct impact on transit funding since 10 percent of the MTF is dedicated to the Comprehensive Transportation Fund, which supports the state's public transit authorities.

Public 221221221 of 2007 amended the Michigan Transportation Fund law to require the creation of an alternative transportation funding task force and a citizen's advisory committee to review and make recommendations for potential sources of transportation funding to replace or supplement the 19-cent gas tax. This task force represents an opportunity to assess how we fund transportation in Michigan in the long term and the need for additional revenue, including funding for transit.

## **Losing out on Federal Money**

- **Urge Congress and Michigan's Congressional delegation to redefine the way Federal Urban Congestion Relief dollars are distributed.**

- **Urge Congress to give greater weight to supporting bus transit when reauthorizing SAFTE-LU**

Many have argued that current federal funding for transit is weighted towards rail-based transit, at the expense of bus services. Michigan which has no rail mass transit system is adversely affected by the current distribution equation. Michigan is the 10<sup>th</sup> largest state in terms of population and yet we are ranked 23<sup>rd</sup> in terms of USDOT grant money for transit projects. A major reason for this is the state has not capitalized on US DOT's New Starts capital grants for creating fixed transit projects. In 2007 Congress appropriate \$1.5 billion for New Starts capital. None of that money went to Michigan.

## **Assessing Transit Funding**

- **Explore Local Tax Options to help transit agencies help themselves**

Since CTF funds are in a common pool that all transit agencies draw from, if one agency expands its services it is at the expense of the 78 other agencies in the state. Local taxes would allow transit agencies to access new revenue to develop better service, without negatively affected transit throughout the state.

Nine states currently have local option gasoline taxes. The local gas tax rates are 1 to 3 cents per gallon in most states but rise to a 5-6 percent sales tax in Illinois and up to 18.2 cents per gallon in some places in

Florida. Michigan's Businesses for Better Transportation (BBT) steering committee has proposed voter enacted local funding on a county by county basis for transportation systems. They propose:

- **One half of a percent sales tax.** Many consider this to be the preferred route but it would require a constitutional amendment
- **Gas and diesel tax.** An additional excise tax assessed to gasoline and diesel on a county basis with rates between three to seven cents per gallon depending on the number of adjacent counties participating
- **Vehicle registration fee:** A surcharge on the state vehicle registration fee of up to twenty percent of current fee for residents in participating counties
- **Additional license fee:** A surcharge from \$25 to \$35 to the state drivers license fee for residents in participating counties
- **Maintain historical funding formula for the MTF**  
While the committee heard considerable amount of testimony expressing need for greater funds for transit it has been acknowledged that this can not be done at the expense of road funding. Well kept roads are crucial to the people and economy of Michigan and for transportation funding should reflect the need for both quality roads and transit.
- **Create a hold-harmless fund within the CTF**  
Some have proposed creating a fund within the MDOT budget that would work on a grant system instead of automatic dispersion based on operating costs. This would ideally allow larger agencies to improve and expand mass transit projects without harming smaller agencies.

## **Transit as an Economic Development Tool**

- **Promote transit oriented development:**  
In metropolitan regions across the country, new transit lines are becoming the next corridors of commercial and residential investment. The Michigan Municipal League is currently working on legislation regarding Tax Increment Finance (TIF) incentives to promote Transit Oriented Development (TOD) along future transit routes in Michigan. Transit Oriented Development consists of high-density development in older communities with existing infrastructure that promotes healthier lifestyles, helps lower income families cut back on transportation expenses, and attracts commercial and retail development.  
The impact of transit oriented development across the nation:
  - In the first four years of Dallas' rail transit system opening there was over \$800 million of new commercial development along its rail line.
  - Denver's Southwest Line opened in 2000 with anticipated daily ridership of 8,400 people but within six years was up to 18,000.
  - In 2004, 58% of metro Denver voters supported the \$4.7 billion dollar FasTracks initiative that would be funded by a 0.4% sales tax in the region and United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) grants. The initiative is expected to create six new rail lines and coordinated bus routes; generate 250,000-300,000 new housing units and 10-20 million feet of commercial space in Transit Oriented Developments (TOD's).
  - Jones Lang LaSalle in Property Futures found that 77 percent of New Economy companies rated access to mass transit as an extremely important factor in selecting corporate locations.
  - Building high-density developments reduces infrastructure costs by 47 percent.
  - Studies have shown for every doubling of employment density, the number of patents per capita increased, on average, by 20 to 30 percent.
- **Urge the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) to be more involved in transit**  
The MEDC should become more involved in public transportation projects. The MEDC and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Jobs Fund could be more focused on attracting and aiding firms that work in advance transit technology and in transit efforts that create jobs and strengthen the economy.

## **Transit Manufacturing Opportunities**

- **Examine incentives for Transit Vehicle Rehabilitation.**  
Transit vehicle rehabilitation reduces the life-cycle cost of public transportation through mid-life rehabilitation of transit buses. Mid-life rehabilitation of transit buses costs 50% of new buses and extends the useful life of a bus from 12 to 20 years. This is a program already in place in Genesee County. Boilerplate language could be added to the MDOT budget to encourage capital bus expenditures be prioritized towards projects that incorporate vehicle rehabilitation.
- **Promote transition of State's fleet of buses to hybrid transit vehicles.**  
The Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) should be more focused on attracting and aiding firms that work in advance transit technology. Hybrid transit vehicles have the potential to increase the fuel economy of buses by 18% to 40%, saving energy and costs. This is a technology that Michigan can be a pioneer due to our automobile R&D and manufacturing capabilities. The 21<sup>st</sup> century Jobs Fund is funding a collaborative study between MSU and Kettering to develop more efficient powertrain designs for hybrid buses. Kettering is also working with Flint's Metropolitan Transit Authority to monitor and study the agencies existing hybrid buses.

## **Promoting Transit Use**

- **Enact Commuter Choice trial program.**  
The state should look at ways to provide incentives to use transit, possibly starting with a trial program for certain state employees. Several states have adopted tax credits for employers or incentives for employees to utilize public transportation, such as non taxable stipends. Maryland's program works such that an employer would receive a tax credit worth 50% of the benefit to the employee with a \$50 limited tax credit per employee per month.
- **Explore and address obstacles to a seamless transit system.**  
Due to limited intercity services and constrained routes provided by transit agencies, it is often impossible to entirely utilize transit to get between two points in the state. Essential to creating a truly effective public transit system is creating a seamless means for people to get from one city to another.
- **Examine airport intermodal agreements to make them more efficient and effective.**  
Our airports connect us to the outside world but too often our airports are not properly connected by mass transit to population centers. To fully exploit the economic activity associated with Michigan's airports, we need to make them more accessible via public transit.

## **More Efficient and Cost Effective Transit**

- **Introduce regional transit authority legislation**  
An authority overseeing public transit could be the key ingredient to providing comprehensive and coordinated public transportation in Southeast Michigan. A regional authority that encompasses all of Southeast Michigan could be best suited to oversee, coordinate, and improve existing services, while developing future public transit services in the region.
- **Standardize local share of operating funds.**  
Transit funding comes from a variety of sources including fare box, local millage, and general funds. Some believe that amount should be standard – to be a minimum amount - across the state.
- **Promote greater cooperation between entities using transit**  
It was argued to the subcommittee that school districts, cities, townships or counties could achieve greater savings by purchasing fuel with transit agencies. MDOT could promote this activity, among other best practices, to transit agencies when savings are possible.
- **Coordinate transportation dollars among state departments**  
The Department of Human Services and the Department of Community Health, each have line item appropriations in their budgets for transit related programs. Often this money is contracted out to private



companies. Directing those dollars be used for public transportation where available instead of private firms aids public transit agencies.

- **Higher Train Platforms to speed loading and unloading to speed travel.**  
Simply elevating the platform at train stations would make the trains more efficient and cut down on time at the station. Implementing this improvement on the Wolverine rail line would take 30 minutes off the Detroit to Chicago trip, making it more appealing.
- **Explore incentives for Signal Priority and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) for buses**  
ITS's are systems that incorporate computer and navigation technology to make transit systems more efficient. ITS includes stop light coordinating, vehicle tracking, data tracking and computerized scheduling. A 2004 report found that in Oakland County, retiming 640 traffic signals during a two-phase project resulted in carbon monoxide reductions of 1.7 and 2.5 percent, nitrogen oxide reductions of 1.9 and 3.5 percent, and hydrocarbon reductions of 2.7 and 4.2 percent. The benefit-to-cost ratios for the two phases of this project were 55:1 to 175:1.
- **Extend the Positive Train Control (PTC) system.**  
PTC's are integrated command, control, communications, and information systems for controlling train movements. Beyond making the rail line safer by making crossings more efficient, PTC systems also enable a railroad to run scheduled operations and provide improved running time, greater running time reliability, higher asset utilization, and greater track capacity. Upgrades on the Wolverine line between the Indiana border and Kalamazoo began in 2002 and, since mid-2006; trains on the stretch have been able to reach speeds of up to 100 mph. Further, extending the system towards Detroit would make the line faster and improve the desirability of rail travel. However, with the questions regarding Norfolk Southern's proposed sale of the line between Kalamazoo and Ann Arbor, it is uncertain if Amtrak and Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) would be able to upgrade the line if they wanted.

## Other Legislation

- **Transit Employee and Rider Safety**  
It is important for public transit to be safe to ensure people will use it. With that in mind legislation that stiffens fines for assaults on transit workers and promote safety cameras should be considered.
- **Establish minimum bathroom breaks for drivers**
- **Develop better signage for buses – multi-lingual.**  
People all from all walks of life and origins utilize mass transit. Efforts should be made to accommodate as many people as possible to promote the use of public transit.

## Conclusion

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Testimony made it clear that public transit is an economic development tool that is underutilized in Michigan in every way - a fact that if not reversed could leave us behind other states forever. Transit agencies have proven their viability and sustainability and, despite lackluster support from the state and federal government, have found ways to improve service and efficiencies. More can be done. Transit agencies are ready to compete and thrive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century but advancements in public transportation can only go so far. Transit could be a bigger part of Michigan's economic solution if we had a long-term commitment in the state for predictable and stable funding and a statewide policy that matched investment to demand. The private sector, municipal governments, advocacy groups, citizens, and the federal government are ready to be partners with the State of Michigan to develop more modern and efficient public transportation systems.

The members of the Public Transit Subcommittee were deeply impressed by the testimony that was heard over the last ten months. The members also enjoyed the enthusiasm of the many advocates who testified and the knowledge and vision they have about public transportation across the State.

The Subcommittee is proud of Michigan's transit agencies and is excited about the opportunity to work with the private sector, advocacy groups, the Administration, the Legislature and the Federal government to find ways to knock down barriers and to create a statewide system that supports modern public transportation so that Michigan can get moving again.

## **Appendix A: Subcommittee Meetings**

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### **April 23, 2007 - Introduction**

- Clark Harder, Director, Michigan Public Transportation Association
- Jackie Shinn, Chief Deputy Director, MDOT

### **May 16, 2007 – Outstate Transit Authorities**

- Rochelle Cotey, Executive Director, Alger County Public Transportation Authority
- Cameron McCollum, General Manager, City of Jackson Transportation Authority
- Jim Dunn, General Council, Upper Peninsula Transportation Authority
- Vance Edwards, Cadillac/Wexford transit Authority — MASSTrans
- Mike Stoner, Bay Metro Transit Authority — MASSTrans

### **May 23, 2007 – SE Michigan**

- Bob Chaprnka, President, Michigan Railroads Association
- Carmine Palombo, Director of Transportation Programs, SEMCOG
- Barbara Hansen, General Manager, Detroit Transportation Corporation, The People Mover

### **June 6, 2007 – Technology**

- Robert Foy, General Manager, Mass Transportation Authority
- Joe DeKoning, Executive Director, Bay Area Transportation Authority

### **June 13, 2007 – Regional Trends**

- Peter Varga, Executive Director, Interurban Transit Partnership – The Rapid
- Sandy Draggoo, CEO/Executive Director, Capital Area Transportation Authority – CATA

### **June 20, 2007 – SE Michigan**

- Sandra Nelson, Director of Special Projects, Department of Public Services, Wayne County
- Norm White, Director, Detroit Department of Transportation

### **June 27, 2007 – Private Partners**

- Conan Smith, Executive Director, Michigan Suburbs Alliance

### **July 25, 2007 – Private Partners**

- Erik Tungate, Director, Community & Economic Development, City of Hamtramck, Executive Director, Downtown Development Authority
- Andy Guy, Michigan Land Use Institute, Great Lakes Project Director

### **September 12, 2007 – SE Michigan**

- Hayes Jones, General Manager, SMART (Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation)

### **October 10, 2007 – Private Partners**

- Megan Owens, Executive Director, Transportation Riders United
- Heather Carmona, Executive Director, Woodward Avenue Action Association
- David Bulkowski, Executive Director of Disability Advocates of Kent County & Facilitator of Faith In Motion
- Casey Dutmer, Chair of Concerned Citizens for Improved Transportation
- Clark Goodrich, Concerned Citizens for Improved Transportation

**October 17, 2007– Railroads and Tourism**

- John DeLora, Chairman, Michigan Association of Railroad Passengers
- Jim Townsend, Executive Director, Tourism Economic Development Council

**October 23, 2007--Joint Meeting with the House Commerce Committee**

- Jennifer Kalczuk, External Relations Manager, The Rapid
- Megan Owens, Executive Director, Transportation Riders United
- Luke Forrest, Public Policy Director, Michigan Suburbs Alliance
- Andy Guy, Great Lakes Project Director, Michigan Land Institute

**November 7, 2007 – Smart Growth**

- Daniel Gilmartin, Executive Director, Michigan Municipal League

**January 23, 2008 -- Developmental Disabilities Council**

- Paul Palmer, Member of the Developmental Disabilities Council, Co-Chair of the Transportation Work Group
- Diane Kempen, Former Member of the Developmental Disabilities Council, Co-Chair of the Transportation Work Group, Board Member of the Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority
- Glenn Ashley, United Cerebral Palsy of Michigan's "All Aboard! Transportation Advocacy Training" program and "Life in Focus" program

**February 13, 2008 -- Review and Discussion of the Chair's Draft Report****February 20, 2008 -- Review and Discussion of the Chair's Draft Report****April 16, 2008 -- Michigan Department of Transportation**

- Kirk Steudle, Director -- Presentation on the Transportation Advisory Committee
- Jackie Shinn, Chief Deputy Director -- Response to the Chair's Draft Report

**Appendix B: Significant Transit Developments to Expect in 2008**

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(Note – these are current projections and are always subject to change.)

This spring:

**Spring 2008:**

- DDOT (DTOGs) will propose the route of Detroit's first new rapid transit line and will hold meetings to get public input on their proposal. (planned for March)
- The Regional Transit Coordination Council, led by John Hertel, to hold a series of public meetings to get input on the region's official regional transit plan.
- Around the beginning of March, SEMCOG will conclude an important study essential to the Ann Arbor-Airport-Detroit rail study that will determine how to provide reliable commuter rail service while satisfying freight rail needs.
- The Ann-Arbor to Howell commuter rail line will be incorporated into SEMCOG's Regional Transportation Plan, an essential step to receiving federal funding.
- In the coming months, SMART, will introduce a first in the nation internet service that allows riders to map out their routes, similar to the website, Mapquest.com.

This summer:

**Summer 2008:**

- SMART will develop a strategic plan to best target their limited funds to provide the best possible bus service to the region.
- In January the RAPID in Grand Rapids finalized a route for its street car plan and in June will make its final recommendations to bring implementing a rail system.

This fall:

**Fall 2008:**

- DDOT expects to get federal approval to begin engineering and designing Detroit's first new rapid transit line.
- John Hertel and the RTCC will develop unveil a regional transit plan and hold public meetings to get input and build support for it. The study to create the plan received unanimous approval from Robert Ficano, L. Brooks Patterson, Kwame Kilpatrick and William Crouchman.
- DDOT plans to open their new Rosa Parks Transit Center (currently under construction).